Community Contact

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs

March-April 2008

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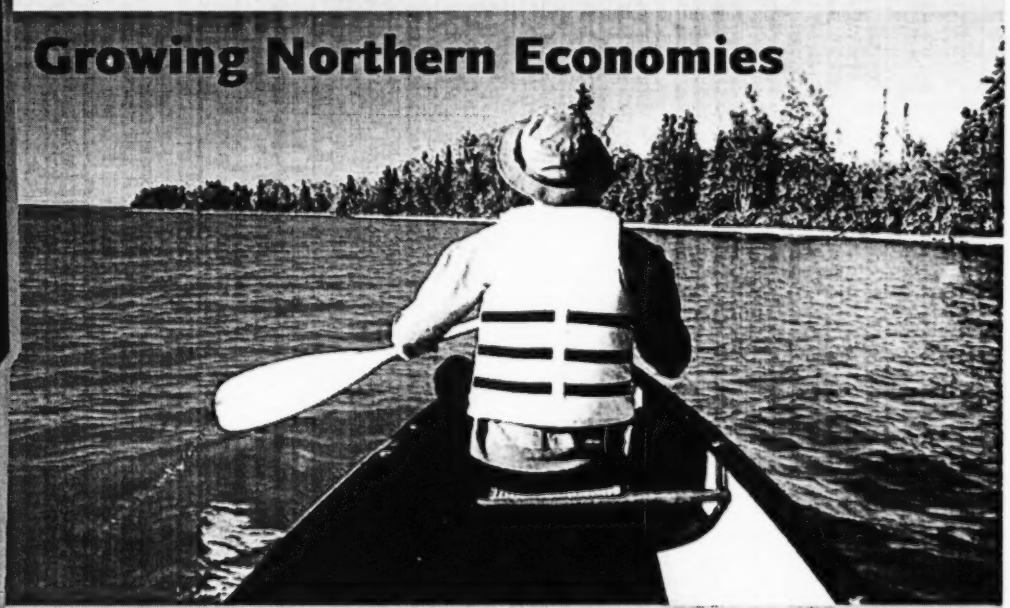

Awe-inspiring scenes are abundant in Northern Manitoba.

Manitoba

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This Issue

Welcome to the March-April 2008 *Community Contact* Newsletter.

The theme for this newsletter is economic development and we feature a variety of articles that look at different aspects of economic development in northern communities. Information is provided on the importance of having a Community Development Plan (CDP) to assist communities in economic planning. ANA has also launched a new *Community Development Corporation (CDC) Manual* that is being distributed to communities and will serve as a tool for organizing economic development. We also provide some information on what a community needs to consider when looking at developing tourism opportunities and we highlight a new business development program aimed at young rural and northern Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

Our feature article looks at the Manitoba Envirothon program. An envirothon is a hands-on environmental education competition for high school students. This program was developed by Canon in the United States and is open to high school groups in both countries. The winning team from the Manitoba Envirothon will travel to Arizona to represent Manitoba at the Canon Envirothon in July/August 2008.

Along with these articles, we provide information to assist communities looking at adjusting their water and sewer rates, the renaming of the annual Rural Forum in Brandon to Capturing Opportunities and the roll out of the newly developed ANA community ergonomics plan template. This template provides councils with assessment tools, control measures, training and resource support to address ergonomic workplace issues and safety.

Enjoy this issue and please feel free to contact us with your comments, pictures and article suggestions or to request additional copies.

Is Tourism for

Manitoba has an excellent reputation for providing a wide range of great tourist experiences like hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, wilderness adventures, entertainment events, museums and cultural festivals.

Even though their origins and their travel reasons vary, tourists need transportation, meals, accommodations and leisure activities. Tourism is the business of serving those needs. The money tourists spend on food, beverages, accommodations and gifts flows back through the local economy, supporting jobs and creating tax revenues.

Tourism is different from most other business because the customer comes to the product, instead of the product going to the customer. What also makes tourism a unique business sector is that the customer is not buying tangible goods, but experiences that become memories. In many cases, the customer is buying the tourism product based on expectations shaped by promotional materials and by word of mouth reputation.

The memories a tourist takes home include meals eaten, places visited, activities experienced and people met. If the memories match or exceed expectations, tourism customers will probably feel that their experience was fantastic and may plan to return. On the other hand, if even one of the services does not match expectation, the visitor may feel the entire trip was a poor experience.

Because word of mouth spreads quickly, what a tourist takes home in the form of memories can make or break a tourism operation or destination. It is the main reason why any community hoping to boost the local economy through tourism needs to have a good plan in place and be ready to work together to achieve shared goals.

While many communities recognize the potential benefits that tourism can offer and try to include it as part of their overall economic development plan, not everyone in a community will

an Opportunity *your community?*

necessarily like the idea of investing in tourism. Sometimes opposition to tourism comes from an unfound fear that tourists will have a negative effect on daily life in a town or community.

It is important for a community to have open and honest discussions as part of its tourism planning process, so that all citizens have a good understanding of what is involved. Your tourism ideas will have a greater chance of being successful if more people understand and agree with your plans. But even if everyone in your community understands and agrees with the ideas, ensuring success for tourism initiatives still requires plenty of work.

It's a good idea to start by identifying:

- what experiences your community can offer visitors
- what types of visitors would come
- why visitors might pick your community over another
- services like food, gas and accommodations your community can offer visitors
- services your community would need to create
- people or businesses that can provide the activities you want to offer visitors
- what effect tourism might have on your community or land
- what licences or permits you will need to operate legally

If you think tourism would work for your community, the community and resource development consultant in your region can help you explore your ideas further and get help from other government agencies.

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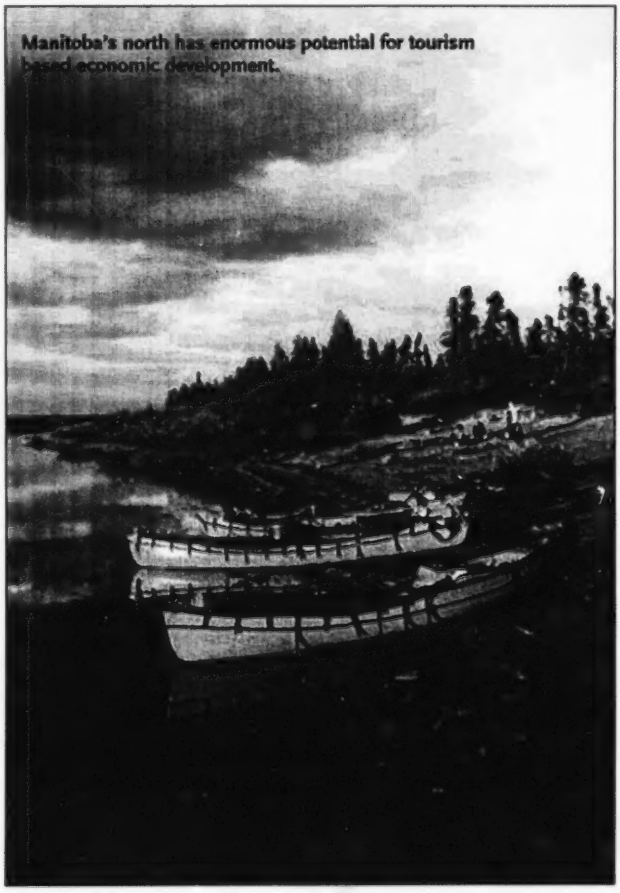


Manitoba's north has enormous potential for tourism based economic development.

gram Helps Young, Rural and Northern
Aboriginal Entrepreneurs

A new program designed to help young, rural and northern Aboriginal entrepreneurs develop business opportunities, skill sets and identify resources was launched in February by Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI).

The program will provide financial help to:

- young, rural, Aboriginal entrepreneurs for costs associated with business startup
- community organizations for activities that teach young, rural, Aboriginal people about entrepreneurship and business

The Young Rural Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Initiative will accept applications for extension programs and business activities aimed at rural Aboriginal people under 40 years of age from community organizations or by Aboriginal youth submitted in conjunction with their local MAFRI GO team.

The program funding can be used for:

- costs of establishing a business
- seminars, workshops, educational tours, conferences and similar activities
- resource materials development

Eligible applicants must fit ONE of the following two sets of criteria:

1. Manitoba Entrepreneur:
   - must be under 40 years of age
   - must be of Aboriginal heritage (status or non-status – located on or off-reserve – Metis or Inuit)
   - must be a Canadian citizen or possess landed immigrant status
   - business must be located in rural Manitoba
2. Community Organizations supporting Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship:
   - must develop an extension program with a targeted audience of rural Aboriginal youth
   - program must contain content aimed at encouraging and supporting Aboriginal youth in entrepreneurship or business activities

All applications must be submitted through the local MAFRI GO Team office and must identify a MAFRI staff person as liaison. An applicant contribution of 25 per cent of total project costs is required and must come from non-government sources. This portion of the project costs can be financial or in-kind support. MAFRI staff will mentor participants for the duration of the program.

Program applications will be required to include an evaluation component to assess the effectiveness of activities in engaging young rural Aboriginal people in entrepreneurial and business activities.

For more information about the Young Rural Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Initiative, contact your local MAFRI GO Team office. You may also call Laurie Crowe, MAFRI business development specialist, at 204-761-0551 or Michelle Bessette, MAFRI Aboriginal program specialist, at 204-726-6220.

Legislation Requires
Community Ergonomics Plan

Recent changes to workplace safety and health regulations require employers to develop a plan to address ergonomics in the workplace. *The Workplace Safety and Health Act* and its regulations require community councils to:

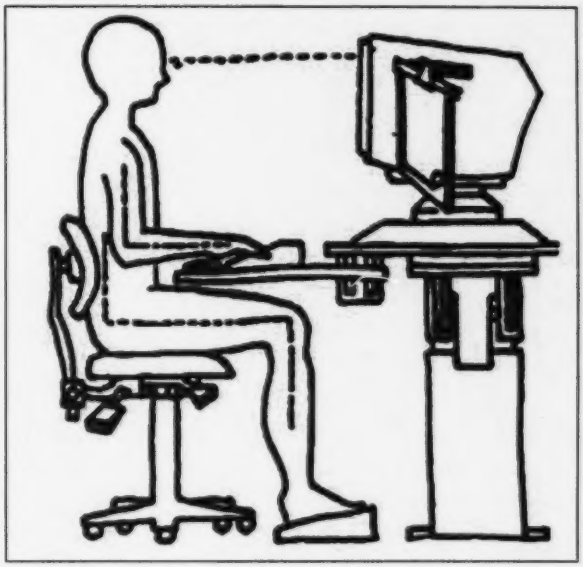
- conduct an ergonomic risk assessment to determine risk to employees
- put measures in place to reduce or eliminate risk of ergonomic injury
- provide training and information for employees related to risks, common symptoms and control measures
- put in place a system to monitor the community ergonomic plan (CEP)
- prepare required documentation

What is ergonomics? Ergonomics is about the fit between people, their work activities, equipment, work systems and environment. Ergonomically healthy workplaces are safe, comfortable, efficient places where working conditions do not compromise productivity.

Manitoba regulations use the term musculoskeletal injury to describing injuries related to poor ergonomic conditions in a workplace. Musculoskeletal injury means injury to or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels or related soft tissues. These can include sprains, strains or inflammation that may occur to a worker in a workplace, often aggravated by conditions such as repetitive motion, forceful exertion, vibration, mechanical compression, sustained or awkward posture or limitation of motion or action.

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has developed a CEP template to help councils meet the requirements of legislation and recently revised regulations. The template provides councils with assessment tools, control measures, training and resource support.

ANA has introduced requirements of the CEP over the past year at the Community Administrative Officer Workshop, Public Works Workshops and Regional Workshops. A roll out planned for spring 2008 will provide all councils with further details.



An ergonomically ideal workstation promotes proper posture. Using poorly adjusted or badly designed workplace equipment can cause serious injury over a long term. The best way to avoid this is to remove the hazard. Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health provides a range of Safe Work bulletins that advise on correct workplace ergonomics. You can find them at gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/bulletins.html. The following bulletins are particularly applicable to office workplaces:

- *#232 Making Your Computer Workstation Fit You*
- *#233 Ergonomic Hazards of the Seated Posture*
- *#234 Office Ergonomics: Neck/Shoulder Area Hazards*
- *#235 Office Ergonomics: Arm/Hand/Wrist Hazards*

Envirothon Gains

Jacqueline Monteith (right), a Cormorant Lake School teacher, helps students follow mini-envirothon rules.

Envirothon doesn't have a large presence in northern Manitoba right now, but that's about to change.

Five teams from northern Manitoba communities representing two from Thompson and one each from Lynn Lake, Norway House and Cormorant participated in the 2007 Manitoba Envirothon.

Hoping to see those numbers increase, the volunteer Manitoba Envirothon Steering Committee convened a planning session in The Pas on February 22, 2008 to see what could be done. Attending the meeting were representatives from:

- Manitoba Forestry Association
- University College of the North (UCN)
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs,
- Manitoba Conservation
- Kelsey Conservation District.

Jacqueline Monteith, a teacher at the school in Cormorant, north of The Pas led the Cormorant envirothon team last year and has collaborated in developing a credit course based on the 2008 Manitoba Envirothon special theme, Recreational Impacts on Natural Resources.

At the February planning session, Monteith identified key barriers currently preventing more northern students from participating in an envirothon. These include schools in isolated communities that do not offer Grade 12, language, social and cultural differences.

So what can be done? After some discussion, it was decided one key way to build northern students' comfort level would be to have peers who participated in an envirothon visit them in their communities and show them what it's all about. For Monteith and her students, that means a few road trips in the coming months, a task she's more than eager to take on.

The steering committee decided to hold an envirothon training workshop for northern students in the fall of 2008. Similar to, but not replacing the province-wide workshop held every spring for all registered Manitoba Envirothon teams, the northern workshop would provide training in soils, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and the special theme. It would also address issues identified as northern-specific.

Following the planning session at UCN, participants drove to Cormorant Lake School to meet with Monteith's class and hold a mini-envirothon during the afternoon. Manitoba Envirothon co-ordinator Andrea Swain from Winnipeg, chatted with the students first, to help break the ice and introduce the activity.

Then students circulated in teams of two through 14 stations testing them on their knowledge of animal tracks and scats, twig

Momentum *in Northern Manitoba*

identification, bird calls, wetland benefits and more. After a debriefing to review quiz answers, Monteith and the students headed outdoors for some physical activity sliding down hills in the crisp, bright sunshine.

Andrea Swain and the envirothon steering members from southern parts of the province reported they were pleased with the opportunity to experience some of Manitoba's north and its people.

Grades 9 and 10 students identify tree species during a mini-envirothon held in Cormorant Lake School.

What's an Envirothon?

An envirothon is an environmental education program that challenges students to learn about topics such as forestry, aquatic ecology, soils and land-use, wildlife and current environmental issues. Students and teachers agree that the benefits of an envirothon reach far beyond in-depth exploration of environmental issues. Team-building, critical-thinking and career planning are just some of the skills also developed through this program.

The Manitoba Envirothon is a program of the Manitoba Forestry Association. The 2008 Manitoba Envirothon will be held in Pinawa, Manitoba from May 22 to May 24, 2008. High school students and teachers are encouraged to register a team or volunteer to help. To get involved with the Manitoba Envirothon, visit the website at **mbenvirothon.com** or contact the Manitoba Forestry Association at 204-453-3182.

Teams from the Manitoba Envirothon will be competing to represent Manitoba at the 2008 Canon Envirothon, where they will compete for scholarships and prizes. Open to teams from throughout the United States and Canada, the 2008 Canon Envirothon will be held in Flagstaff, Arizona, July 28 to August 3. Estimates say over 500,000 students throughout North America participate in an envirothon program each year. For more information about the international Canon Envirothon, visit their website at **envirothon.org.**

Community Contact thanks writer Avery Ascher of The Pas, Manitoba for work in preparing these articles.

The Importance of the **Community**

Knowledge of important community infrastructure and resources is required for the community development planning process.

Now that the January 31 deadline has passed and communities have created and submitted their Community Management Plan (CMP) as required by Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) regulation, it's time to work on another valuable tool called the Community Development Plan (CDP).

Unlike the CMP, the CDP is not a requirement stipulated in ANA regulations. But that does not mean the CDP is without value. It is, in effect, among the most valuable planning exercises a community council can involve itself with throughout the year.

CMP and CDP in Brief

To review briefly, a CMP is a key component of local governance. Its focus is community administration and maintenance. It outlines and details how the council will achieve its objectives and measure progress. Submitting a CMP annually triggers the release of community operation and maintenance funding.

The CMP is the property of the community council. The ANA role is to make sure the CMP is completed and to act as a resource to the community by providing advice and helping the council consider the important issues. The CMP is a work in progress that the community council adapts throughout the year as the need arises.

The CDP has a different role. It addresses resource development at the community level. It looks into the future and sets the stage for developing action plans that detail how the council intends to achieve the goals and objectives of balanced capacity building. Balanced community development creates an environment favourable to economic development and other positive social developments.

Building the Community Development Plan

One way to begin the discussion about building a CDP is to provide an example of a table of contents for such a plan. It's important to remember that the degree of analysis contained in the CDP will differ from one community to another depending on the level of the community's development. The example shown here can be modified to suit the needs of individual communities.

Table of Contents
Summary
Introduction

The five pillars of community development:

Building community capacity creates an environment for economic development, thus these five pillars of development help build an inventory that can lead to creation of a community economic development plan:

1) *human capital – education, skills, employment, population*
2) *physical capital – location, infrastructure, roads*
3) *natural capital – geology, geography, climate, resources*
4) *financial capital – businesses, access to loans, banking, economy*
5) *social and organizational capital – governance, bylaws, culture*

Vision for moving forward:

- *vision statement*
- *priority goals or specific projects/actions – one to three years under each pillar*
- *future goals and specific projects/actions – three plus years under each pillar*

Implementation plan:

- *responsibilities, priorities and schedule under each pillar*
- *project map and project timelines under each pillar*

Measuring success:

- *expected outputs and outcomes of the various goals and actions under each pillar*

Development Plan

Once ANA community and resource development consultants have reviewed each community management plan, they begin a process of identifying potential themes for building the CDP. Comments are submitted to each community, highlighting possible opportunities.

To engage your community in the development planning process, contact the appropriate community and resource development consultant for your region. Your regional consultant will walk you through the process of formulating a living document that becomes a reference point for community development planning.

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ANA Launches New CDC Manual

A new Community Development Corporation (CDC) Manual designed by Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) will be distributed to communities over the next few months.

A community development corporation is a legal entity that prepares a community's economic development strategy and acts on it. The main reasons why communities organize a CDC are to:

- organize community economic development
- create jobs
- stabilize or increase the local population base
- take advantage of opportunities for small enterprise development
- mobilize community resources to attack issues facing the community
- engage in community capacity building

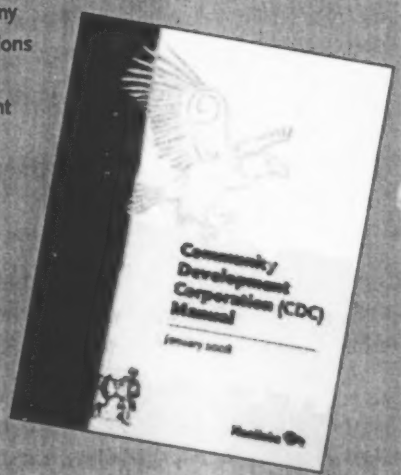
Experience shows communities that have not organized themselves for economic development have substantially reduced their chances for long term economic growth and prosperity.

Purpose of this manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide community members, community leadership, development service providers and other stakeholders who have an interest with a tool for organizing economic development. The manual is comprehensive, yet easy to use, and it is specifically applicable to ANA communities.

This manual provides practical information on how to start and operate a CDC in Manitoba. The information in this manual can serve as a starting point for discussion, for action and for developing a solid understanding of CDCs.

This manual and many other useful publications are available on the Manitoba government website at **manitoba.ca/ana.**



Capturing Opportunities: *Rebranding Rural Forum*

Rural Forum is changing its name to Capturing Opportunities. The change will reflect new and broader scope planned for the annual event. The central goal of the annual event is to help rural Manitobans take advantage of the many exciting business opportunities available to them locally and around the globe.

The new Capturing Opportunities event format will build on the solid foundation of previous events, featuring a variety of workshops, speakers and demonstrations to create new entrepreneurship and identify business development opportunities for rural and northern Manitobans.

One area highlighted for this year's event is the rapidly growing market for nutraceuticals and functional foods. It's a market that presents many opportunities for Manitoba entrepreneurs to create value-added locally processed foods and related products.

Capturing Opportunities happens April 24 and 25, 2008 at the Keystone Center in Brandon. For more information call 204-761-6317 in Brandon or visit **capturingopportunities.ca** on the Internet.

Manitoba Works Bulletin

...Municipalities and non-profit employers can receive a full minimum wage subsidy...

Called Rewarding Work, a new Manitoba strategy will help citizens find meaningful employment and make the transition to independence from social assistance.

Administered by Employment Manitoba, the new program will provide wage subsidies to employers across the province help individuals in receipt of income assistance re-enter the workforce. Municipalities and non-profit employers can receive a full minimum wage subsidy for up to a year to hire and train people receiving income assistance. Other employers can receive up to 50 per cent of minimum wage to help cover the cost of providing on the job training. The goal of Manitoba Works is permanent work with the subsidized employer.

More information for interested employers is available by calling Manitoba Works at 945-8400 in Winnipeg or toll free at 1-866-332-5077.

Setting Water and Sewer Rates **in Your Community**

Public Works

Over the past few years Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) has replaced and upgraded water and sewer infrastructure in many northern communities. The schedule for replacements and upgrades is prioritized based on risk, need and readiness.

The cost of operating and maintaining new and existing facilities has gradually increased over time and there is a need for communities to review their water and sewer service cost annually. Electricity, fuel, chemicals, maintenance, pump equipment and labour have all seen increases. In communities where water and sewer services are delivered by truck, rising fuel costs have a significant effect. Operator training is also a large part of the costs to maintain water and sewer facilities.

A good time to review costs of sewer and water in your community is when annual budgets are being prepared. Here are four steps to take when reviewing your community water and sewer rates:

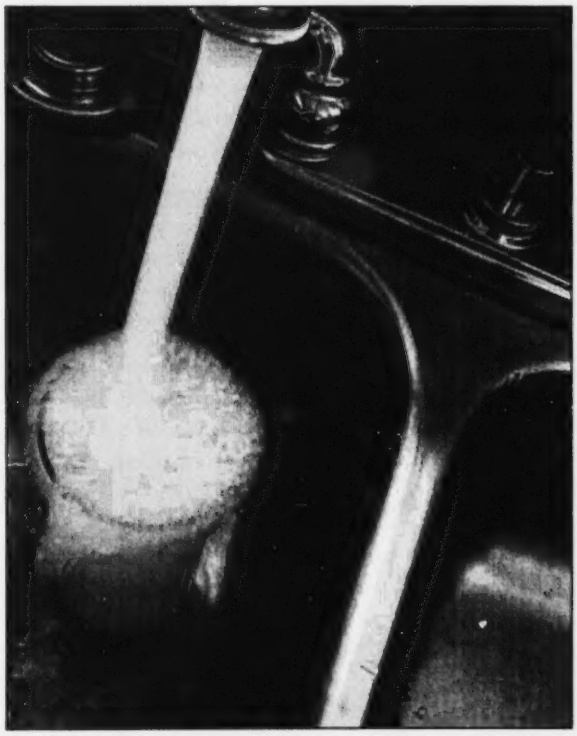
1. Review and compile all water and sewer costs from the previous fiscal year. Chief administrative officers, water operators and public works employees should be able to provide this information. This amount should be compared to the annual funding provided in the maintenance cost analysis (MCA) funding sheet for that service.
2. Determine the annual water consumption and, in some cases, the annual sewer collection if possible. This information can be obtained from your water and sewer operators.
3. Calculate the costs. For water, take the total cost of water services for the year and divide it by the number of gallons produced by the community water treatment plant for that year. This gives council the cost per gallon to produce water. For sewer, take the total cost of sewer services and divide it by the total amount of sewer collected and treated. This gives council the total cost per gallon to treat and dispose of sewer. Knowing these numbers makes it easier to estimate costs for future years.
4. Calculate 20 per cent of the overall costs of water and sewer services to determine how much local revenue is required for those services. Once calculated, these costs can be used at council's discretion to set water and sewer rates that will allow the community to recover the costs from users.

Example:

total cost of service for one year X 20 per cent = total local revenue required

Council must not forget the commercial users in the community, such as schools, restaurants and hotels. When service rates charged users are calculated, council should consider adding fees to help cover future increases in the costs of equipment, supplies and service employee wages.

Each community is different and the information provided may not apply exactly to your community's situation. Council should contact their regional Northern Affairs office for help with further refinements and adjustments to the calculations.



Communities need to review water and sewer services annually to make sure revenues will cover the delivery costs.

Cross Lake Trains New Community Development Officer

Noelle Halcrow began on the job training as the community development officer (CDO) for Cross Lake Community Council this past January. In her new position, she is learning how to take part in managing economic development issues, building community resources and capacities and increasing community control and ownership of services. Her position will also involve helping the Mayor and Council with co-ordination and communication on development initiatives.

Noelle Halcrow

Projects she will be involved with include:

- ownership and control of local housing
- reactivating the community development corporation
- helping manage the fire and ambulance building
- planning community development strategy
- helping local entrepreneurs

Noelle is currently being mentored by Cross Lake community administrative officer Darlene Beck and ANA community and resource development consultant Charles Nyabeze. She is also involved in an economic development mentorship program administered by Communities Economic Development Fund. Noelle maintains contact with other area development organizations and is making plans to participate in economic development officer training to be offered by University College of the North later this year.

A life-long resident of Cross Lake and a mother of two, Noelle knows her community inside out. She looks forward to upcoming workshops and conferences (Vision Quest and Capturing Opportunities) and to meeting new clients and networking with other professionals in community development. Call her at 204-676-2465 to discuss or share information on community economic development.

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Community council members, community residents and departmental staff are strongly encouraged to submit feedback, comments, questions, suggestions and ideas to the editor.